
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP OF WOMEN SCHOLARS IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION (Case Study at Mamba'ul Ma'arif Islamic Boarding School Denanyar Jombang)

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is an important thing that is highlighted by practitioners and academics. Research on the theme of educational leadership in Islamic boarding schools shows that leadership is the main factor that drives the success of reform efforts in Islamic boarding schools. This research formulates related: How is the transformational leadership of Ulama Women in defining success? Analyzing the internal-external context, setting strategies, building capacity, and negotiating authority in improving the quality of education. This research uses qualitative research with a case study approach. Data collection techniques used in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. The data obtained were analyzed using the technique of reading all the data, coding, connecting the themes or descriptions, and interpreting the meaning of the themes or descriptions. The results showed that the output of students was better through good management and leadership of the Pesantren.

Keywords: *Transformational Leadership, Women Ulama, Improving the Quality of Education*

ABSTRAK

Kepemimpinan merupakan suatu hal penting yang disoroti oleh para praktisi dan akademisi. Penelitian tentang tema kepemimpinan pendidikan di pesantren menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan merupakan faktor utama yang mendorong keberhasilan upaya pembaruan di pesantren. Penelitian ini merumuskan terkait: Bagaimana kepemimpinan transformasional Ulama Perempuan dalam mendefinisikan keberhasilan? Menganalisis konteks internal-eksternal, menetapkan strategi, membangun kapasitas, dan menegosiasikan otoritas dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipan, dan dokumentasi. Data yang diperoleh dianalisis dengan menggunakan teknik membaca seluruh data, mengkode, menghubungkan tema atau uraian, dan

menafsirkan makna tema atau uraian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa output santri lebih baik melalui manajemen dan kepemimpinan pesantren yang baik.

Kata Kunci: Kepemimpinan Transformasional, Ulama Perempuan, Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan,

INTRODUCTION

Records of the leadership of female ulama in the history of the development of Islam in Indonesia are still lacking. The one-sided construction of history (Isnaini 2016) causes women to rarely be written in a balanced and proportional manner regarding their achievements. Although the number of female ulama is abundant, historical records only tell of the dominating role of men in all fields of politics, economy, social, and culture, including education. (Burhanuddin 2002)

The word Ulama is usually only connotated to men. In various religious social institutions, it is rare to find women occupying strategic positions, let alone as ulama. The role of female ulama is as important as male ulama, namely; teaching the yellow book, leading prayers in the women's dormitory, providing motivation, and also being active in community activities. (Budur and Demir 2019)

Patriarchal culture is maintained through restrictive ideas about gender relations called State Ibuism. Where men are associated with the public sphere and women with the domestic sphere (Santoso 2019). Bu Nyai in her journey is marginalized due to religio-sociological constructions with theological arguments, many of which assume that women are subordinate to men (Susanto 2015).

Writing about the roles of women in leading Islamic boarding schools is very interesting, where the scope of the Islamic boarding school is education, da'wah, and community empowerment (Telaumbanua 2019). This is because leadership in an educational institution greatly affects the sustainability of Indonesia's indigenous education system. (Hasan 2014)

The role of women ulama in leading Islamic boarding schools requires massive religio-sociological factors. (Kodir 2019) Ulama are acknowledged not only considering their expertise in religious knowledge (Ismah 2016), but also their integrity in community development. (Tajuddin et al. 2023) The term women ulama emerged as a form of resistance and discourse movement related to the work of ulama who only refer to one gender, namely men.

The term women ulama is preferred to the term Ibu Nyai because the scientific potential in religious and intellectual areas is very different. Bu Nyai will be embedded automatically for women who are married to a Kiai. The term Ibu Nyai is built on tradition, regardless of her scientific or family background. Unlike the case with female ulama, which is attached to a person if that person is considered scientifically appropriate, and has the behavior of ulama in her daily life. (Ismah 2011)

Tradition and culture in the community put women's positions only as secretaries and Treasurer, rarely becoming top leaders as caregivers or head of the institution. (Khotimah 2017) The public's view of women as leaders is still taboo. Women's independent personality, boldness to express opinions, persistence, aggressiveness, and negotiators (Sufiyana 2017) are considered to cross the boundaries of tradition and culture, even though the role of women is enormous.¹

The management that is dominated by women in Mamba'ul Ma'arif Islamic Boarding School in Jombang is the reason for choosing this location. The tradition in the Islamic boarding school is that the leadership can be given to women in the management of the head of the institution, the treasurer and the secretary. Sons-in-law, even if they have competence, still cannot hold high authority. This Islamic boarding school does not see gender in the distribution of leadership mandates, but rather based on the dzuriyyah line, provided that they have competencies that are worthy of occupying the position.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, which aims to determine the Transformational Leadership of Female Ulama in Improving the Quality of Education at the Mamba'ul Ma'arif Denanyar Jombang Islamic Boarding School.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pemberdayaan The principles and characteristics of Transformational Leadership of women scholars at Mamba'ul Ma'arif Islamic Boarding School, namely: (a) Identify themselves as agents of change, (b) Leaders have a clear vision (visionary) and communicate to subordinates, (c) Courageous, (d) Value driving motor, (e) Lifelong learners, (f) Trust others, (g) The occurrence of learning processes, empowerment, (h) The realization of a culture of cooperation and a conducive organizational work climate, (i) Having the ability to deal with complexity, ambiguity, and uncertainty, and (j) Involving the participation of subordinates in solving strategic organizational problems.

The findings in this study indicate that each Islamic boarding school unit has a clear and realistic vision for developing the Islamic boarding school. In line with the literature Islamic boarding schools and each dormitory unit must have a clear and mutually supportive vision based on the philosophy and strong values of the administrators and the community. The data presentation related to visions that are strongly based on religious values and beliefs. Thus, there is a strong relationship between the visions of each dormitory unit with the vision of the foundation and the philosophies on which the vision is based. (Farida and Zulkarnain 2019)

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The findings in this study confirm the efforts of women ulama to authorize, delegate tasks and responsibilities to them. As discussed earlier, the distribution of these leadership roles is based on their belief that others can do the work. All the women ulama articulated this value of trust. They gave freedom to teachers on leadership retribution and the distribution of leadership roles in the restructuring of pesantren. The findings in this study indicate that they were able to build the organizational capacity of the pesantren as well as the re-creation of the boarding school structure as an institutional development. (Srimulyani 2012)

Transformational leadership is more about moralistic leadership in the values shared by leaders of educational institutions. The value system gives confidence in understanding experience and intuition. Accepting sacred authority and feelings as a way of fully resolving problems. Transformational leadership focuses on the leader's ethical values as central to leadership and administrative practices. (Syadzili 2018)

As stated in the 2003 National Education System Law, national education aims to develop students' potential to become people of faith and devotion to God Almighty, moral, healthy, knowledgeable, intelligent, creative, and independent, and to become democratic and responsible citizens. The law emphasizes religious and moral values, intellectual compensation, and democratic values. (Mas' ud et al. 2002)

Although Indonesia is not a theocratic state, religion plays an important role in the activities of society. In fact, the 1945 Constitution emphasizes that every citizen has a religion. In the realm of education, these religious values are integrated into education standards. The value is manifested in the personality of the santri. Religious and moral goals are often repeated explicitly in the Indonesian Education System Law.

Non-formal education is an education process that is carried out as a substitute, or addition, and or complement. For formal schools as a support for lifelong education. Informal education consists of independent learning activities and is usually carried out by families and communities. In this context, pesantren as a provider of both formal, informal and non-formal education. The National Education System Law confirms previous education laws, stating that schools in Indonesia are divided into formal, non-formal and informal types. Formal education consists of primary, secondary and higher education. (INDONESIA 2006)

Formal education at the Mamba'ul Ma'arif Denanyar Jombang boarding school organizes madrasah-based education management starting from Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Madrasah Tsanawiyah to Madrasah Aliyah. Meanwhile, non-formal education is the activities of students outside of madrasah class hours but is still managed under the auspices of the madrasah. As for informal education that should be obtained from family and society, the dormitory unit under the care of each dormitory takes over its role. So it can be called Pak Kiai as a father figure or father figure while Bu Nyai as a mother figure. (Samad 2019)

Internal-external Context Analysis in Improving the Quality of Islamic Boarding School Education

Women ulama in this case are leaders in the Mamba'ul Ma'arif Denanyar Jombang boarding school who are dominated by women who initiate and design-controlled changes in the boarding school. Among other things: seeking input from both internal and external before making a decision. Then convey an idea for response. Successful leaders can analyze the context of the Islamic boarding school and take appropriate action. They use values and life beliefs as a filter tool in the process of contextual analysis and adaptation.

Each woman ulama is able to analyze the existing internal context and community expectations. This includes Islamic boarding school resources and facilities. Attention to improving facilities should also appear higher. The ability of women scholars to analyze the performance of pesantren, especially regarding the achievements of santri in madrasah as well as the National Examination each year. Women ulama provide data on Islamic boarding school performance to staff and teachers so that they are aware of what they are doing and what they will achieve. (Widodo et al. 2020)

In addition to the internal context, women ulama also understand the external context, including the expectations of santri guardians and the community. National education policies and societal changes are other indicators in fulfilling the external analysis. One of the community's expectations is that the religious piety and morality of the santri. Another expectation is that santri guardians expect their children to be accepted and continue their education in college.

their organization, in this case in the institution under their auspices. The involvement of stakeholders in vision building shows the existence of a democratic system in Islamic boarding schools. It is not enough for the top leader to articulate without participation the vision and without involving other parties who have a logical interest in the outcome.

In summary, the findings in this study corroborate the findings on the components of transformational leadership by Women Ulama in Islamic boarding schools containing idealized influence, namely(Karim 2010): (1) having big ideas, (2) having confidence, (3) having strong intentions, (4) having high commitment, (5) having consistency, (6) having work focus, (7) having an all out attitude, (8) having a sacrificial attitude, and (9) having pride.

Establishing Development Strategies in Improving the Quality of Islamic Boarding School Education

The strategies found in each case, there is a main focus, namely excellent service for santri, santri guardians and the wider community. This focus is based on the belief that being a leader in Islamic boarding schools also serves in the context of education or scientific transformation. The main focus to improve quality and maintain achievement is much more difficult than starting it, in the hadith mentioned *alfadlu lilmubtadi*.

Women ulama reviewed and then concluded that leaders must have these skills. It is the key to transforming knowledge, ideas and programs to the members of the Islamic boarding school community. So that when evaluating the program, analysis and evaluation of the Islamic boarding school context can be done. Women ulama must be able to read the situation, the strengths and weaknesses of Islamic boarding schools. Expectations of each segment of the pesantren community, policy context and pesantren performance.

Regarding the Transformational Leadership component, it can be concluded that the indicators of transformational leadership in terms of inspirational motivation are: a) making himself a role model (role model/uswah hasanah)(Dewi et al. 2020), b) convincing communication, c) inviting change and improvement, d) presenting an attractive vision and mission, e) campaigning for action, f) giving meaning to work, g) comparing work, h) providing solutions, i) understanding opportunities and intelligently handling them, and j) leaders are not trapped in the mainstream or general understanding.

Building Islamic Boarding School Capacity in Improving the Quality of Islamic Boarding School Education

One of the requirements for a pesantren to be successful in improving its quality is the human resource factor of teaching and education personnel. So the ability of the leader, in this case the female ulama, must be able to build the capacity of Islamic boarding schools. It was found that female ulama intervened in aspects of boarding school capacity that included personal, professional, organizational, and community capacities that supported overall development.

Transformative leaders stimulate their followers to be more innovative and creative by asking for opinions, describing problems, and taking new approaches to the problems at hand.(Bass and Riggio 2006) Leaders can stimulate the intellect of their employees by: (1) inviting imagination and dreaming, (2) providing learning opportunities and further study, (3) challenging the status quo, (4) teaching not to think procedurally, (5) inviting new perspectives, (6) questioning old assumptions, and (7) socializing symbols of innovation. (Karim 2010)

Women ulama provide some kind of rewards through praise when teachers do well, material rewards or bonuses, salary increases, and so on. This is called well-being

which includes physical spiritual psychological and financial well-being. Women ulama often ask teachers about their personal or professional problems, advising them to discuss any problems with her. Spiritual well-being is also provided as capacity building, such as organizing recitations or majelis taklim for teachers, providing motivation after and before meetings. Meanwhile, physical welfare is providing a health room or clinic for teachers and students as a health facility.

Women ulama pay attention to further education for teachers and its nature, in-service training is important to be made for teachers and staff. Participation and workshops and courses such as curriculum preparation courses, English courses and providing a support system for teachers who want to continue to higher levels. Other training is teacher training, on the use in their instruction. Where professional problems are discussed with fellow subject teachers both individually, and as a team. Alternative solutions are sought to develop instruction to equip teachers with more knowledge and skills in curriculum and instruction.

How much power women ulama give to madrasah heads seems to vary from case to case. There are restrictions on stakeholder involvement, sometimes collegial in the decision-making process and encouraging participatory management. Collaboration among stakeholders includes santri, guardians, committees and the community. Women ulama are described as having distributed power and important leadership roles in each segment of the community in accordance with community expectations. Overall, power sharing as one of the characteristics of Islamic boarding school leadership of women scholars. Collaboration can be successful only if everyone involved has something meaningful to offer, is willing to share with others and has the skills to work together confidently.

Negotiating Authority in Improving the Quality of Islamic Boarding School Education

Transformational leadership is specifically related to the idea of improvement. (Bush and Coleman 2006) Bass and Avolio assert that leaders must: (a) stimulate the enthusiasm of colleagues and followers to see their work from several new perspectives, (b) lower the mission and vision to the team and organization, (c) develop colleagues and followers at a higher level of ability and potential, and (d) motivate colleagues and followers to look at their own interests, so that they can benefit the interests of the organization. (Bass and Avolio 1994)

Ibu Nyai can be interpreted as a mother, for the santri of the community. In most cases, a nyai has the unofficial power to act on behalf of a kiai, especially when dealing with female santri. Whether or not her name is officially recorded in the boarding school leadership structure, she is the female leader of the Islamic boarding school. When a woman becomes a nyai either by birth or marriage, this status comes

with inherent duties and demands from both the Islamic boarding school and the local community. If Ibu Nyai is able and willing, she can achieve important positions in Islamic boarding school leadership and in the community as a whole.

Their own identity as the boarding school figure indicates santri ibuisim. With the resources at their disposal, some women ulama can also transcend power and authority. Binding them with their kinship status into a different and sizable pattern of agency through interaction is referred to as public and private space.

Women's power has significant meaning for other groups of women in the Islamic boarding school educational environment, especially the female santri. The position allows active and qualified nyai to take over larger institutions and expand their public participation beyond the boundaries of the boarding school. Some nyai from Islamic boarding schools in Jombang are also members of the DPRD, regents or active in the Fatayat Board. Despite serving as board members, such public positions have no special connection with their duties in the affairs of Islamic boarding schools. The research sites showed that some women ulama do act as women preachers in majelis taklim, but on top of these activities, they are involved in various public professions and perform various roles. As close family members of the kiai, nyai also acquire a certain derived power or authority within the hierarchical Javanese culture and patriarchal leadership of Islamic boarding schools, where a kiai is the central figure. (Gumiandari and Nafi'a 2019)

All the rights and roles that the nyai have achieved are also partly related to their status as direct members of the kiai family, where notions of ibuisim and priyayization would be a way to cultivate such power and influence. Their position also shows the complex intersection of different aspects of culture, religious values and cultural notions of womanhood in the lives of women Islamic boarding schools, combined with the concept of charisma. (Marwiyah 2016) The opportunities available to women ulama in the wider society have a bargaining position in 'negotiating' the public sphere. Not only with their male colleagues but also with people who hold patriarchal views from the perspective of Islamic boarding schools or the local community. Some of them have to struggle with very traditional viewpoints about women.

CONCLUSION

Women Ulama define success in improving the quality of boarding school education at the Mamba'ul Ma'arif Islamic Boarding School Denanyar Jombang, namely: (a) Identifying himself as an agent of renewal; (b) Having a brave nature, (c) Trusting others, (d) Acting on the basis of public interest and the insistence of his group). (e) Improving abilities on an ongoing basis, (f) Having the ability to deal with complex, unclear or uncertain situations, and (g) Having a vision for the future.

Women Ulama conducts internal and external analysis in improving the quality of education at the Mamba'ul Ma'arif Islamic Boarding School Denanyar Jombang, that in this case, they can do: (a) stimulate the enthusiasm of colleagues and followers to see their work from several new perspectives, (b) lower the mission and vision to the team and the organization, (c) develop colleagues and followers at a higher level of ability and potential, and (d) motivate colleagues and followers to look at their own interests, so that they can benefit the interests of the organization.

Women Ulama set strategies in improving the quality of education at the Mamba'ul Ma'arif Denanyar Jombang Islamic Boarding School, through indicators, as follows: a) making himself a role model (role model / uswah hasanah), b) convincing communication, c) inviting change and improvement, d) presenting an attractive vision and mission, e) campaigning for action, f) giving meaning to work, g) comparing work, h) providing solutions, i) understanding opportunities and opportunities and intelligently handling them, and j) leaders are not trapped in mainstream or general understanding.

Women ulama in carrying out capacity building in improving the quality of education at the Mamba'ul Ma'arif Islamic Boarding School Denanyar Jombang, can implement through indicators: a) making themselves role models (role models / uswah hasanah), b) convincing communication, c) inviting change and improvement, d) presenting an attractive vision and mission, e) campaigning for action, f) giving meaning to work, g) comparing work, h) providing solutions, i) understanding opportunities and opportunities and intelligently handling them, and j) leaders are not trapped in mainstream or general understanding.

Women Ulama in negotiating their authority in improving the quality of education at the Mamba'ul Ma'arif Denanyar Jombang Islamic Boarding School, through: 1) inviting imagination and dreaming, (2) providing learning opportunities and further study, (3) opposing the status quo, (4) teaching not to think procedurally, (5) inviting to new perspectives, (6) questioning old assumptions, and (7) socializing symbols of innovation.

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